a book

by the
'Queen's Park Riot'
Defendants

1 judge + 12 jurors and half a fuckin chance

$12.99

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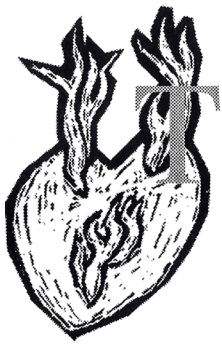


Introduction

This book is a recognition and celebration of the battle fought on, and since, June 15, 2000. It is the culmination of our collective action and our rage over the treatment of poor people by the Tory government. Written on the eve of a number of high profile trials, it is one tool we are using to educate people about the "Queen's Park Riot", garner popular support, and raise desperately needed funds. It is a collection of works by the June 15th defendants ourselves — our stories, our struggles, and our determination.

Those of us arrested for June 15th form a diverse group with two things in common: our dedication to the fight for social change, and our criminal charges. We come from many different ethnic and class backgrounds and have many different reasons and battlefields for our struggles. We believe that it is crucial that we tell our stories and that people know we will not be defeated by the court system or the government — ours is a story of continuing resistance.

Our resistance on June 15th was impressive, inspiring and incredible. In the face of police horses, batons and handcuffs those in attendance held their ground and fought back. We compiled this book to share the stories of June 15th and after, to share how people have been fighting back just as hard since then, to acknowledge the stories that otherwise go untold, and to expose the shameful repression of the system and the cowardice and fear that motivates it.

This cowardice and fear was clearly related to the oppression — racism, sexism, classism, homophobia — that is so pervasive in the system, but also the recognition that the resistance manifest on June 15th was organized, determined and effective. If that resistance was left unchecked, if it was allowed to continue to organize and grow, it could force the government to its knees. This would mean ending the exploitation of poor and working people in this province, as well as the profiteering by the rich that goes along with it. Fearing the end of "business as usual," the state chose to go on the offensive to quash whatever resistance it faced.

The state attacked people for being people of colour or queer or homeless because it is fundamentally oppressive. However, these groups were also attacked because of the threat posed by different oppressed groups and different movements uniting in struggle. There was a conscious effort to bring down people who represent different movements and oppressed groups to subdue organizing within those groups and break the ties between them.

This divide and conquer strategy is exemplified by the way people were targeted and treated as a result of June 15th. A number of homeless men were denied bail. In the fall of 2000, many of these men had no choice but to plead guilty or face a two year wait in jail before their trials. Many of them were not guilty but could not bear (and did not deserve) to wait for their day in court. Now they have criminal records which will make it even more difficult to get work and to get bail in the future, further locking them into poverty.

After a justice of the peace (JP) learned that one woman of colour was accused of throwing rocks, he said, "Maybe she thinks she can get away with that kind of thing in Chile, but in Canada we don't allow that sort of thing." The J.P. then ordered this community legal worker with no criminal record detained in order to "maintain confidence in the administration of justices."

Most defendants arrested on June 15th were forced to sign bail conditions that prohibited them from protesting or associating with OCAP (The Ontario Coalition Against Poverty). The Superior Court ruled these conditions unconstitutional several months later.

An Iranian man was beaten so badly in 52 Division police station that he could barely walk. In order to spare further torture, he signed strict and unconstitutional conditions to get out.

A young queer woman was put by herself in the men's section of a detention unit for hours. She was held in shackles the entire time, even during her court appearance which is virtually unheard of. The crown tried to detain her, a 17 year old with no criminal record.

One man of colour was brutally beaten at Queen's Park. Video footage of this beating shows a pile of cops repeatedly hitting him, often with their batons. All that was visible of him was his leg, shaking uncontrollably.

Known organizers from other organizations were arrested. Leaders of Anti-Racist Action, the Communist Party and the anti-globalization movement were targeted. One anti-OAS (Organization of American States) organizer's disclosure (evidence against a defendant) included surveillance photos and officer's notes from the month prior to June 15th.

A young Latino was identified in his disclosure as someone who had the potential to become a leader and who needed to be brought down.

Police Chief Fantino declared catching the "rioters" the number one priority of the police. Officers spent thousands of hours cataloguing video footage for use against protesters, examining roughly 75 videotapes and 5000 photographs.

If all of the June 15th defendants' written disclosure were to be stacked, it would create a pile nearly two stories high.

The courts and the cops were attempting to bring OCAP down with every move it made, every bone it broke and every person it arrested. The police and the courts tried to attack OCAP as an organization as well. The police arrested the "leadership" of OCAP and charged them with the antiquated indictable offences of "counseling to commit assault", "counseling to participate in a riot" and "participating in a riot". All three were forced not to associate with OCAP or attend protests for several months as well. However, because of their inherently sexist attitudes, the police neglected to arrest women active in leading the organization. This meant that not only could OCAP continue to function effectively, but that women alone were at the helm of the organization. This made OCAP a stronger, more egalitarian organization than it had ever been.

The repression after June 15th was at a level that had not been seen in

Ontario for decades. As defendants we organized public meetings, press conferences and demonstrations to keep our plight in the public eye and to combat the individualizing effect of the courts with collectivity and support. OCAP's resilience in the face of attacks from the state has been impressive as well. The attack launched on the organization resulted in approximately 250 charges being laid against its members and allies for June 15th. While the government expected OCAP to collapse under the pressure, instead we grew stronger, incorporating our fight in the courts with that already being waged on the streets. Since that time another 250 charges have been laid as a result of other OCAP actions yet we stay strong and keep fighting back. We will continue to organize until all of our co-defendants are free. We will also work to support other defendants who are arrested for political work as this is an essential component of any struggle.

While none of us were happy to have to go through the ordeal that the charges from June 15th resulted in, we are all stronger for it. As June 15th defendants we fight to win, not for vindication from the corrupt justice system but to win the broader struggle that brought us together in the first place. These are some of the stories of that battle.

The contributors to this book, OCAP and the June 15th Defence Committee take no responsibility for its contents. 13$^{1/2}$ was produced to the benefit of the June 15th defendants and the Defence Committee but independently of both.
Front cover artwork & flaming hearts throughout — *Rocky*
Layout/design/original artwork — *Shannon Muegge*
June 15 OCAP street poster — *Stefan Pilipa*
Photograph of Defendants — *Jeff Schantz*
Back cover poem — *Paul Daniel*

defendants

Toronto Police Service
Mugshot Form

Report Date: 2001/03/12 14:45
Booking Status: V
Printed By: 498
Requested By: 498

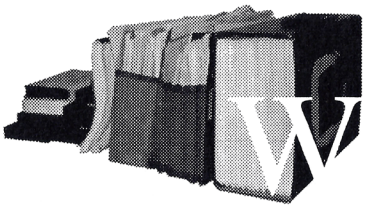
Name: Pilipa, Stefen
Address: 368 George ST, Apt #101, Toronto, ONT

Mugshot - Front

Booking #:	00-002428-52	MTP #:	014042-97
Booking Date:	2000/07/21	FPS #:	981255-D
Date of Birth:	1976/01/25	Sex:	Male
Height:	180 cm 71 in	Colour:	White
Weight:	70 kg 154 lbs	Hair Colour:	Dark Brown
Eye Colour:	Brown		

Charges:

1	c.c. 65 participating in riot
1	145(2)CC - Breach of Recognizance Fail to Comply



Tell them that we are a thousand strong!

Gaetan Heroux

We came to Queen's Park a thousand strong on June 15. Twenty-two people have died on the streets of Toronto in the last six months. The Safe Streets Act makes it a crime to be on the streets. Shelters are full and overcrowded. Everyday across the city cops confront the hundreds of people sleeping in the parks... and we are asked will there be violence today?

We came to Queen's Park a thousand strong on June 15. 17,000 units of social housing that were promised to us are cut. The new Tenant Protection Act churns out 2000 eviction notices a month in Toronto alone. Gentrification all around us. Condo developments over run poor neighborhoods. They build housing that we will never be able to afford...

We came to Queen's Park a thousand strong on June 15. We are given a minimum wage that is not a living wage. Welfare cuts force our children to go hungry. Employers cheer as they profit from the labour of non-union workers forced to work a sixty hour week...

We came to Queen's Park a thousand strong on June 15. Bigots from local residence associations and local business associations gather to stop a shelter from being built in our community. We are told that homelessness is bad for tourism. Cops begin their sweeps under their new Target Policing program and the social cleansing of the downtown core is now city policy...

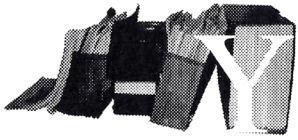
We came to Queen's Park a thousand strong on June 15. Three men freeze to death on Toronto streets. Richard dies in Allan Gardens while hundreds walk by his body. Steve and Ivan's lifeless bodies are found in a rooming house on Sherbourne Street. Roy is murdered in his room on Parliament Street. A thousand people have died on the streets of Toronto in these seven years that Harris and his Tories have been in power...

We gather a thousand strong in Allan Gardens today. We gather in a park that has become a symbol of resistance for poor people in our community.

It is from this park that we build resistance. From this park we marched to 88-90 Carlton to demand that an empty building be turned into housing. From this park that we went to the Ontario Legislature to denounce the cuts to welfare. It is this park that we occupied for three days to create a Safe Park to fight back against the harassment and intimidation of the cops. We will not live and die in poverty. We will not suffer in silence. We will fight back. We march on Queen's Park a thousand strong and when we are asked will there be violence today we will say "NO! Today the violence stops. We will stop the violence because today we have gathered in Allan Gardens and we tell them that we are a thousand strong!"

The Real Cost of My Long Dating Process with Regina the Crown.

Anonymous



ou can tell from the way the College Park complex is designed: condos/mall/offices/courthouse and prison all in one convenient location. The courts are supposed to present the veneer of respectability over the daily on-going humiliation and exploitation of the poor. Everybody but the prisoners is on the payroll. From the judges and crown attorneys, even defense lawyers, down to the legal assistants, clerks, secretaries, and bailiffs, they're toiling in the bowels of the courthouse. Lots of expensive suits and skirts. Fancy restaurants downtown get paid.

The cops get paid extra to come and sit around, their word worth more than yours by virtue of the fact they're already on the payroll. As long as we're mentioning those "poor" police, think of all that money they spent on fancy cameras — still, digital & video — then the months and months of logging video and photo evidence. I've seen that they've written down their every last bruise — mostly to their egos. There's all the cop psychologists who must have had to be called in to tell their boys to stick it out and not to question what is going on. Instead, they focus on getting new toys, tazers, asps, more pepper spray, fancy new shields, light-up helmets, spiffy new goggles, boots, suits, and hell, even a helicopter (I think that one's on the corporate payroll).

Even the media got paid, extra for the ad revenue coming out of the sensationalizing of the event itself, continuing through the subpoenas, more lawyers getting paid to argue that point, then sitting on the stand themselves, paid to put their own twist on the case. Hell, GlobalNews and ShittyTV even managed to make an ad for themselves out of the riot footage that still runs occasionally.

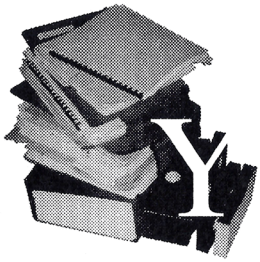
Someone, someplace, please add this all up. And how much are they spending on that shiny new roof on the old city hall courthouse?

You, on the other hand, will lose whole days of your life: in paddy wagons, in detention, in holding cells, in reporting, in the waiting room at legal aid

(now there's a room with a view of some serious racial profiling going on!) — all before you even get to trial. Then more days spent in court, in jail, in community service. (Wasn't that what we were doing there in the first place?)

Now, parole officers (PO) are on the payroll too (they're OPSEU [Ontario Public Services Employees Union], don't forget they went on strike this year). Of course they're pretty far removed from any notion of working-class solidarity, looking down their noses at you from up there behind their desk and glass shield window. Oddly enough, the community service placement officers are outsourced, a different payroll. Usually a Christian group, like the Salvation Army, runs that though they sit in the same cubicle maze and behind the same steel locked doors as the PO's.

And for the parole officer, whose standard intake questions include: "Do you find that most of the people you associate with are criminals?" Since Mike Harris criminalized poverty? Yes. Sadly, it seems my friends aren't on the right payroll. What can I say when it's become a crime to be poor?



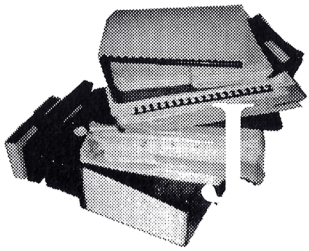
Justice? Just Us!

P.J. Lilley

You can't win in the courts, so don't set out to "fight to win". Fight to survive. Even when you win, you lose your time, your record, your dignity, and your freedom. The colonialist judicial system is designed to strip power and authority away from you at every step. Just like the awful sir from 52 who dismissed the notion of my having any rights and joked on the elevator down to fingerprints that I forfeited that freedom — long before any judge saw me. Arguing about "rights" doesn't really hold up in a system designed to reinforce state moral and political control.

The important thing is to support one another, and others caught in the system; the June 15th Defense Committee was a small step in that direction. Having a defense committee works against the isolation and individualization that the state tries to enforce from the moment the handcuffs snap on. A support network means friendly faces (which are crucial through such a dehumanizing experience) when you get out of jail, and throughout court delays. It also keeps you part of the struggle, particularly when bail conditions are designed to cut you off from political activity. For example, we collectively fought our non-association conditions and won back the ability to associate with each other and OCAP. A defense committee can also help through the onerous process of applying for legal aid, or finding witnesses and defense videos or photos. There is also the all-important social support, like childcare for court dates, collect calls from jail, or offers to help with your rent or feed the cats if you end up doing time. The defence committee allows for building a fundraising & awareness campaign, with buttons, pamphlets, posters, zines, web pages, public speaking events and so forth. Also critical was the momentum and international solidarity we were able to raise over the course of the defence (which is still mounting see our sign on letter at www.ocap.ca/police_riot.html).

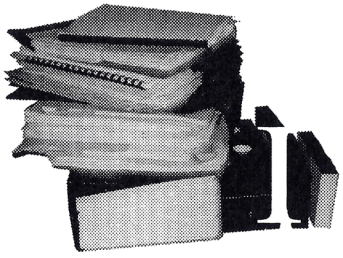
Basically, the courts aren't about whether you're actually guilty or not, they're about whether or not they have a suitable rationalization for punishing you. Don't trust legal strategy for vindication; just try to hold the line to continue on to fight another day. Support your comrades, and stay strong.



Shaking Things Up

Mark Hiller

June 15 was a good day of protest. We shook up the bosses and politicians who create poverty and we defended ourselves against their hired thugs. Two months later I was charged and arrested; two years later I have a criminal record and am on probation. The same has happened to many others. But this is only something that people who are obsessed with power have used to insulate themselves from our justified resistance, for everyone is inherently entitled to the means of enjoying life, starting with food and a home, and if society will not provide these things we have the right to uplift ourselves. June 15 solidified this for a lot of people.



From Fear to Anger and Poverty to Justice

Speech Delivered at the Public Meeting — Febuary, 2002 *

Magally San Martin

think the first thing that must be said is why it was so important to attend the demo of June 15.

Anyone who cares to look as what is happening in our city, or who like myself, works with low income people, knows that we are witnessing the rapid deterioration of public services and the disappearance of the social net.

This has had a painful impact on poor people. But our concerns have not been taken seriously, in fact it seems that it is business as usual, while we are seeing more people go hungry and die in the streets. Homelessness makes news but the media fails to mention hundreds are being evicted using the new Tenant Protection Act.

We are all uncertain of the future. And there is a lot of fear and anger. The conservative government's way of dealing with this poverty and anger has been to give free rein to the police to harass the poor into hiding in the summer, intimidating people and, if they dare protest, violating their rights. So we have the slashing of funding to social services and the gross increase in the funding of the police. Who, in order to justify their income and overtime, must invent criminals, who invariably happen to be people of colour. We the Latinos know.

On June 15, the Ontario Coalition Against Poverty organized a demonstration that called for three basic demands,

> Raising the welfare rates
> Abolishing the Safe Streets Act
> And repealing the so-called Tenant Protection Act

I went to the demonstration to show my support for these demands. But also aware that since the poor of this province had not been given a voice they

should demand to be heard.
What I witnessed and suffered on June 15, was the police not only ready for a confrontation but actually eager to engage in one. I have never seen the police deploy their forces in a manner that injured so many people and put hundreds at risk. The police surrounded people with their horses, pushed them and went over them. I think the pictures you've seen speak for themselves. Curiously, they began to arrest people long before there was a confrontation. And hours later, they savagely beat Sandra Smith who was not even at the demo. And they arrested people like me.

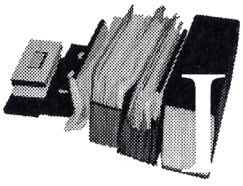
I think that our right to dissent and protest is forcefully and violently being denied. Police are using more and more weapons at public demonstrations, as a matter of course rather than a last resort. I think that fear is increasing in the communities of colour and poor people, Native people, especially for the safety of youth. Fear always breeds anger.

The answer for social unrest is to respond to the demands put forward by groups like OCAP and to demand that the police be accountable to the communities they serve. The police must be held responsible for their violent and racist behaviour.

*slightly adapted from its original version

The Harder They Push, The Stronger Our Struggle

A.J. Withers



was arrested six months after the June 15th demonstration took place. Due to a police error, I ended up being charged indictably. Because the crown wanted to try me summarily, I was given a choice: either plead guilty to one count of obstruct or go to trial on fifteen counts. I pled.

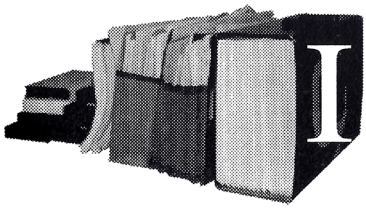
At my sentencing hearing, the Crown attorney asked me why I, in my condition, would go to the June 15th protest. I replied something like:

I went to June 15th to demand that the Tenant Protection Act and the Safe Streets Act be repealed, that the cuts to welfare be restored and the relentless attack on poor people stop. I went because people with disabilities are some of the hardest hit by the Harris government's policies: from the cuts to ODSP [Ontario Disability Support Program] *and welfare to the increase in housing costs. The Harris government is trying to isolate us by cutting off our programs and abilities to get around. We cannot allow this to stop us. I went to Queen's Park because we need to resist this government by going to demonstrations. But disabled people need to do much more than attend demonstrations. We have a responsibility to organize to resist the Tories and anyone else attacking marginalized people in Ontario. We cannot sit idly by while our ability to thrive, to even survive is being stripped from us.*

We went to Queen's Park to fight back. Our demands were just and reasonable, yet we were met with brutal force. The government uses the police on the front lines to suppress protest and dissent. The next stage is the court system where they attempt to further repress political struggle with threats of jail and more brutality. One of the greatest things about OCAP is that as the state intensifies its attack, we hold our ground. With each new round of arrests, there is another group of people that steps up and takes on whatever is needed. While there is no doubt that repression has increased exponentially since June 15, OCAP has met it with ingenuity, creativity and resilience. We will fight to win until the injustices in our society are eliminated. I stand behind our goals on June 15th, as well as the other defendants. We will continue to support them as we work to build a stronger resistance.

Expect the Worst, Fight For Better

James Semple

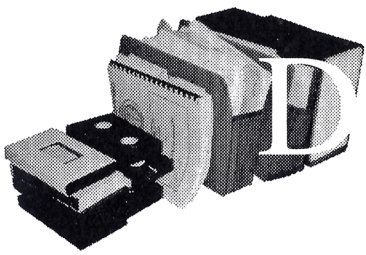


went to June 15 for a couple of reasons. The first reason is because I was a member of the Ontario Coalition Against Poverty. Secondly, I went because I had spent ten years on the streets and whenever I almost got off the streets I felt that the government was pushing me back out onto them. When I got off the first time I had an apartment for about $500 and I was paying last months rent off. Then Mike Harris came in and cut the welfare rates to $520 and I wasn't able to pay my last months rent.

The next time I felt the government cutting into my life was when my daughter was almost born in the States because the doctors were on strike. It wasn't the government against me myself but it was the government against people of my type and that had my level of income. This was the big reason I went to June 15th.

I got arrested on August 1st. I got detained but if I had had an actual lawyer in court for me I probably would have been able to get out no problem. I have gotten out before without a surety but I had to go with the duty counsel and he got me a detention order. I had to stay in custody for a long time. I go through the court system basically with the understanding to expect the worst and hope for the best. That is not really the best way to go through, but it is the best way for me because I can't expect to get out but I can hope to get out. I can expect to stay in jail so this way doesn't get my hopes up that much. It is kind of hard sometimes when you have a gang of guys up against you but other times it is good because the gang of guys is on your side. Also, It was 3 per cell which sucked. When my high court bail went up it was just before Christmas so I wasn't released until January 7th.

My trial was pretty quick. I thought it was pretty fast seeing as my lawyer didn't ask any questions of any witnesses, well he probably asked one or two but not that I remember. His position was that he was going to make them prove that I did what I did. I can show you from any picture in the Sun newspaper that it was me. It is kind of hard to mistake me.



Why I Fought Back

Toby Moorsom

During my brief detention in 52 Division I was quite humoured by a couple of statements made by the attending officers. The first came from one of the esteemed men hired to do the official thinking for the force. Indicative of the lack of critical mental capacities within their ranks, the Toronto police have created a whole sub-division dedicated to gathering intelligence. The flattering corollary, we have learned, is that this unit spends the majority of its resources monitoring leftist demonstrators.

In an entirely clichéd scenario the intelligence officer presented me with an offer to rat on my co-conspirators and myself. I was asked why I, as a student in a masters degree program, wanted to involve myself with OCAP types. This officer laid two paths in front of me. With the masters degree, I "could have anything in the world", or, with a continued relationship with OCAP, I could have a prison cell. Unwilling to hand over my intelligence I was then bullied by the fingerprinting officers who asked if I did any volunteering with poor people (i.e. do I help soften the blows dealt to them by handing out blankets or old food). They questioned whether I actually knew "those people" or was just a middle class youth looking to get my kicks by rioting.

As ridiculous as they are, the statements of these officers are quite indicative of the ideology that underpins the Tory government. The language that is used to justify continued attacks on the poor is so fundamentally flawed that most of us are able see its weaknesses: our lives contradict it everyday. But when people inevitably question this ideology, the organized use of violence is used to keep us at bay.

What was bothersome about the words of these officers was that they create a false dichotomy between myself and other OCAP activists, as if I am not also poor and eligible to be among their ranks. Poverty is treated as a sort of ledge that one falls off — one is either poor or they are not. In reality, however, poverty occurs on a scale. Some of us do better than others, but the

vast majority are still getting screwed over by the people who currently rule this province.

I have certainly benefited from a great degree of privilege as an able-bodied white male in a racist, patriarchal society, but in order for that privilege to buy off my resistance I would have to overlook so much. I would have to forget the alienating experiences I have had in an under funded, ideologically corrupt school system. I would have to ignore the huge burden of student loans hanging over my head in an extremely tight job market with stagnant wages. I would have to forget the rampant cuts to health care, environmental policy and enforcement, the exorbitant rent I've spent on derelict housing, and even my own previous experiences as an innocent victim of police brutality. I would also have to overlook the many times I witnessed the blatant harassment and brutalization of street people in my neighbourhood at the hands of officers under the guise of the 'Safe-Streets Act'.

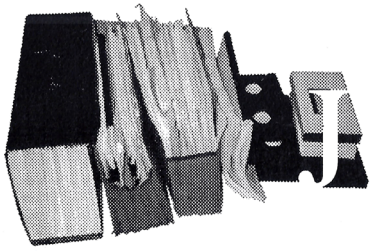
Just as the intelligence officer tried to suggest I could have anything in the world, so too is the rest of society fed false hopes about their future. For a growing majority, these hopes are destined to go unrealized. There is a structural unemployment rate in this economy that means no matter how hard people try a certain number will inevitably remain in the ranks of the poor and unemployed. Those who do have jobs, on the other hand, are being compelled to work longer hours and take on the work of those being laid off.

I want to be clear that on June 15th I wasn't simply acting on rage that arrived from my own poverty. I recognized my relative privilege (which translates into having a greater chance of getting off) and felt that I should lend it to the broader movement.

As far as I am concerned the greatest lie of these times is that which suggests humans should, and by nature do, place individual gain above the needs of the community — as if any human can function outside a social context. I think that as long as we remain convinced that acting in self-interest is the best way of realizing our human needs we will continue to be oppressed and exploited. But it is important to recognize that people do not enter this com-

petitive thought process willingly. We are coerced into it and as the state response of June 15th makes clear, powerful forces are prepared to use violence as a means of suppressing action that steps outside these ideological parameters. One of the main reasons I fought back on June 15th, 2000 is that I object to living in a world that expects me to conspire against my fellow humans on a daily basis

I also fought back because I don't see the possibility of maintaining our existence if we continue to capitulate to the forces of destruction, commodification and impoverishment that continually work to divide and conquer us. On June 15th I resisted the baton blows of the officers, but the struggle also took place on another, equally important front. That is, I resisted the barriers that compel us to focus on difference rather than solidarity and theoretical debate above concrete, transformative action.



Community Action, Community Defense

Kristin Schwartz

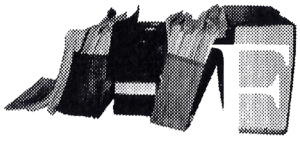
June 2000... In Toronto, people were trying to grapple with the crisis in our social structure, and the growing murderous poverty. There was a lot of political organizing and unrest. At the same time, across North America, the anti-globalization demos in Seattle had sparked a spirit of rebellion among all kinds of people.

The June 15 demo focused that unrest and rebellion. It was publicized broadly and early, which made it possible for lots of people who were willing to take and defend militant action to hear about it and participate on their own terms. I knew the demo would have a powerful impact and I was excited to be there.

I've been involved with militant politics for a decade, and from my experience, it's important to show support, love and caring for people who've been arrested doing political work. The demonstration isn't over when the people leave! And organizing isn't just about demonstrations. In this case, working with the defence committee was especially rewarding because the defendants came out of so many different communities and movements. Toronto is multicultural, sure, but it's very segregated by culture, class and politics. We need to savour every opportunity we have, to meet face-to-face and learn with others who are willing to stand up to the cops for a righteous cause.

Statement of the Accused

Shayesteh Mohammadian



irst of all, I would like to make it clear to everyone in this court room today that what happened on June 15, 2000 has not changed my views about poverty, its causes, and the necessity to fight it. I am not a woman of violence, but will continue to fight it as a political activist, as a rights activist, as I have done for many years, starting back in Iran.

Decent dignified housing should be a right, a basic human right, not a privilege, and I am absolutely convinced, and more determined than ever before, that I must fight for it. No rights have ever been offered to the people on a silver tray. Every one of them is a hard won achievement. Make no mistakes about it! Had it not been for the struggles of the people, of the have-nots, we would still be living under the cruel, exploitative, conditions of the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries. What transpired on June 15th was nothing but another page in the history of class struggle. And nowhere in history have we ever read, nor will we ever read, that in such clashes the people caused or started the violence.

What I did on June 15th, 2000 was defend the peoples' rights against the state's organized force of violence.

As we all know, the Tory government in Ontario has taken numerous measures that have led to the rich getting richer and the poor getting poorer. One such measure was revising the 'Rent Control Act' which practically removed any effective control over the rent increases. This, along with cut-backs, lay-offs, already high unemployment rates, inflation, wage controls, a draconian cut-back to welfare, and so on, has displaced thousands of people, especially single mothers. They became shelter dwellers, street dwellers, soup kitchen clients, and food bank users.

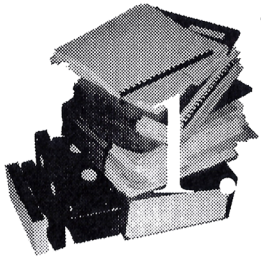
On November 11, 1999 Toronto Star, an article entitled "The dark side of the boom", commented on the "good times" in Canada when "the economy is booming and is now firing in all cylinders." It goes on to ask, "What of the numbers of homeless people that seem to be increasing daily on the streets of Toronto, the food bank users, the single mothers, and welfare

recipients?" The same article quotes Mel Hurtig, the author of the book *Pay the Rent or Feed the Kids; the Tragedy and Disgrace of Poverty in Canada.* He notes, "Personal disposable income has plunged to modern lows, personal debt has risen to modern highs, household savings have fallen, right through the floor into the basement, to all-time lows." And this is the story of those who can afford to have a disposable income, a household savings and a personal debt. Here, in Ontario, the richest province in the country, child poverty is almost twice as high as the national average. There are thousands of women who put up with abusive relationships, fearing homelessness, and their children become traumatized along with them. Here, in Toronto, the richest city in the country, there are women who have to sell their bodies to pay their rent. In short, in this unjust social system, humans are easily, but cruelly, robbed of their future hopes. But, this is not the end of the story. There are humans who even lose their lives under the wheels of this punishing system. There are patients who die in the ambulances of Toronto while being pushed around from one hospital's overflowing Emergency to the next. There are homeless people who die on the bare surface of the sidewalks. A school child was recently killed by his abusive parents because there were no school counselors to pick up the early warning signals.

So the questions we should be asking ourselves here today are: Where is our sense of humanity for our fellow beings? Whatever happened to Human Rights, including food, clothing, and shelter? If the love of humanity is the essence of civilization, why are we trying it here in this court today? Why is the state attempting to punish poverty for the second time?

May 20, 2002

Toronto



Things I Learned Because of June 15 2000

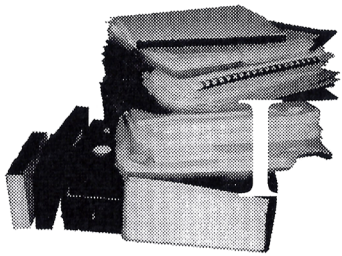
Shannon Muegge

Who they beat up in jail, and who they don't.

2. Before that day, I felt as though the titles "politcal" and "active" had to be earned. I understood this as a process of reading theory, memorizing statistics and city councilors names and attend ing meetings. I always felt insecure, never entitled to call myself an "activist". After standing with fifteen hundred others where both cobblestones and any illusions that the police are a protective force for the people of this city were ripped up from under our feet, there was a major shift in my understanding of good political activism. It's very simply about anger. And action taken to diffuse that anger. An organization's job is to orchestrate and focus that anger and become an amplifier for which it can come out, pointed in one direction, and pumped LOUD.
3. Following June 15 there was a bit of controversy in some arenas around the issue of "violent" defence. I wasn't at these debriefings where I would have impatiently taken offence at those debates. I was up on tip toes trying to glimpse the news through bars and over cell mates heads, all of who where verbally applauding the demonstration and pretty much just freaking out. In that arena it is not a complex topic. Obviously because a lot of the women in the Metro West Detention Centre that day understood what was really necessary to have the rights of the poor protected and heard, they felt empowered, not threatened by that display of determination.
4. I learned what jail food smells like, and I learned how the tiniest things can become so important when denied so much: to know the time, to have a bit of paper from a tampon wrapper to roll a cigarette, to read an Oprah magazine, to get an invitation to play cards. A love note from friends pressed against the glass separating you from your lawyer and held there by him long enough for you to read, then crumpled up and he starts talking legal hocus pocus with you. You always split your matches ripping them down the center so as to get two sparks from one.
5. The criminal system is quicksand. At least half of the people in jail are up on charges like breach which is just about having outstanding charges. So many people just get pulled down and sucked into some

thing as easy to catch as scabies in shelters, or HIV on the street.

6. Having attempted to partially dissolve the idea of "activist" in point 2, I must admit in point 6 that that definition is very much there in bail court standing with charges deemed as "political." Your charges are probably no more political than the person sitting beside you in the pen but support gets you out of jail. Even more so, money because it means you have connections to people with tidy clothes and heavy bank statements. You don't need a degree in political science to see how unfair this is but spend a morning in bail court to know it know it.
7. That a proper, honorable defence is largely impossible as long as protest is criminalized in this country. They move the game onto the tennis court where the ground is slanted and they have a racket and you're still holding your mop. Try drawing a fundraising logo and resist yourself from scrawling 'damn right we're guilty!' at the bottom.
8. We're REALLY really SICK of living from milk crate to storage space to shopping cart. The demands of OCAP on that day still stand, plus we have more Mr. Tory Leader whoever you are now.



Putting It On the Line

Justin Saunders

went to the demonstration on June 15 because anti–poverty work was extremely important at the time; and it still is. It was starting to become clearer what the road we were heading down was with this government. Things had gotten worse; two or three years before, it wasn't so bad. There was an awareness starting to be built around what the government was doing – at least in me. Also, I was interested in OCAP and OCAP's actions. OCAP's anti-poverty work had caught my attention when I was living on the street. I always respected them as a group that was willing to put it on the line.

The summer before, I had lived on the streets for a few months in downtown Toronto. There are a few places where people tend to congregate on the streets. I was sort of hanging with punk kids on Queen Street because it is a good place to pan and squeegee. That was when Community Action Policing was in its first or second year. We saw a lot of cops kicking people out of parks, waking folks up at five in the morning and confiscating whatever they had on them.

It was really cool that the Safe Park started that summer, the summer of '99. A few of us went over there, we didn't end up staying because it was in the east end and we stayed in the west but it was really good. OCAP seemed really militant which I thought was awesome. It was the first time that I realized that anti-poverty work was going on in Toronto on an organizational level, not just doing outreach, but actually organizing.

Personally, I also went because people I knew were organizing for it and there was a lot of expectation around it. People were really excited about it and I didn't really know why at the time. Also, Windsor had just ended and it was the next thing that I had been planning to go to.

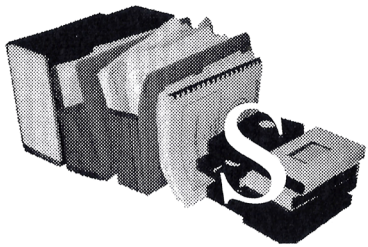
As well, the demands put forward on June 15th were really clear, really concrete: the 21.6% cut to welfare, and Safe Streets Act. It wasn't' just "we need more housing", which is true, but it was in really concrete ways in which people were being hurt by the policies of this government.

At the demonstration and afterwards, so many people were charged. I was really lucky because I got full legal aid but I heard that so-and-so had $5,000 worth of legal bills. If I was in that position, there was no way I could handle it so I thought it was important to raise money.

I remember there was a time when I wasn't really involved in the defence committee though. I went to a couple of meetings. There were still people who were totally interested in where I was at regardless of my personal involvement in the defence committee, the same was true for others. Even if you went on your own to court and took care of your own stuff people still cared and followed up. There was definitely solidarity going on. I felt it was very important, especially over a long period of time. It is easy if things last a few weeks or couple of months but after two years people were still raising money and looking at videos. It was really good.

I try to go to people's trials or hearings even though my charges have been dealt with. I think it is important because when you are in a courtroom it really does make a difference when you turn around and see there are 10 people there to support you.

At the demo, they arrested me and assaulted me so the charges were complete crap. I ended up taking a peace bond. There is no power to the $500 bond; even if I broke it nothing would happen to me. Two days before my trial the Crown offered it to me. I sort of wish I fought it in trial but this seemed like the best thing. My charges were complete bullshit but the system is so screwed up I thought it was better to take the bond.



Making A Stand

Meadow

Someone behind me screams each time these batons fly closer and closer. I'm walking backwards afraid to turn my back on this angry group of people violently telling me: YOU ARE NOT ENTITLED TO STAND ON THIS PIECE OF EARTH!! I'm holding on to my friend, some stability while everything is falling apart around me. My friend is on the ground, cop on top, I see them so far away. I blink. I'm being pulled away from them, my body with no power, immobile under cop hands.

When I tell people what I was charged with, so many congratulate me — "obstruct police? yeah fuck those pigs up!" or "assault police? yo, she's a soldier!" How hard to stand there and say that, no, I actually did not do those things. I had gone out on June 15 hoping to give what I could to affect change. Now the people who surround me are asserting that I succeeded.

For months I have a gaping hole in my leg. I try to be casual about it. Battle wounds tell that you were willing when shit got hectic, but I know it's perverted to say like "look look I'm a victim." I try to use it as an example of the effects of a violent police state, but it seems to provoke little response from many outside the "activist" circles.

I had about 5 different video angles to try and put together a take on what went down to counter the crown's version. I knew that the crown's allegations were not true, and that they most likely knew it too. Of course, the truth seems to have limited appropriateness in the court. It is unadvisable to suggest, as the videos do upon close inspection, that my friend and I were pushed down by a uniformed cop.

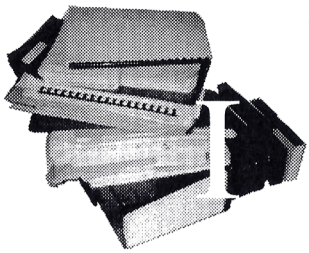
As I prepare for trial, I am not too worried about possible punishments if the judge thinks that I did "assault a peace officer." I know I probably won't get any jail time, and my circumstances what they are, any probation, etc. would be a relatively minor inconvenience. In my mind, June 15 was a challenge to the way those in power view the people that their actions affect.

Therefore, I feel deflated to now have the confidence of the status quo on my side — me, a young, meek, white female with a "good job."

My actions and the actions of the police on June 15 were political. Both lawyers' motivations were political. The trial seemed anti-climactic in that politics were never brought up in court. All the examinations of whose leg, whose arm, why, when, how was all a facade, justification and legitimizing on the part of both sides. So at the close of the day when the judge says that the crown failed to convince him that I obstructed and/or assaulted the cops, I have little sense of victory.

And in the end, what was accomplished? All that energy and time and money, achieved what? I am no freer to speak what I believe, or to walk where I want, or to defend myself against someone in a badge. People in this city are no less hungry or cold or persecuted.

I try not to be offended by my own privilege as I say that it was still all worth it. I would do it all again. We must resist the threat to our rights and the rights of our neighbours the best that we can. I believe that courts are a risky but worthwhile battleground, as precedents set can permanently affect the rights of millions. I hope that I have learned some courage, and that if there is a next time for me, I will be able to bring my politics and my personal truth to the table. I won't make choices out of fear.



Can't Jail Resistance

Sean Lee-Popham

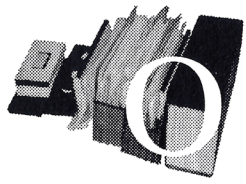
'm in jail for political actions and for holding a ruthless government responsible for its actions. What is important to me is that this political movement continues — that people are not diffused into a 'jail support movement.' Obviously I want support from people ... [and] one of the strongest forms of support that I can have is knowing that there are people outside continuing the work that they have started, working to support each other and create a sustainable movement.

Being in jail has reminded me that whenever people's freedoms are denied people will resist. Here that resistance takes the form of ensuring that you can exercise what freedoms you can through constant strip searches, no contact with the outside and regular cell inspections. Prisoners are able to get contraband into jail to make their time here more livable. This resistance is like that of workers who skim from the till to bring their minimum wage up to a living wage, like that of tenants who bring furniture back in the backdoor as the landlord brings it out the front, like that of citizens who 'didn't see nothing' when questioned by the cops about who broke into a bank machine.

The level of political analysis in jail is unsurprisingly high — for who better to understand the brutality of a society than those that the society feels are disposable. For that's what society is saying to you when you are placed in jail — you have nothing constructive to contribute, you are no help to anyone, you are disposable.

2001

Whitby Jail



Who's The Criminal?

Omid Zareian

On June 15, 2000, a few thousand people marched to Queen's Park to address the issue of poverty in Ontario directly with the provincial government. They were faced with brutal actions by the police. The message from the government was so clear. If you want something you are going to be faced with cops.

The system of governments in general, including the Ontario government, represents a capitalist state. According to its own ideology, the state is supposed to maintain harmony within the society where democracy is a practice of this ideology. However in reality this is not the case. The government serves interests of its own class and democracy is found only within the free market itself. The free market depends upon the productivity of the society and in turn, must use exploitation of the workers to survive and accumulate. Class divisions become an integral part of this particular system. The police and the military are forces used to protect and serve this bourgeois state and in this case it becomes evident why the police will beat up on poor people. Has it ever been heard of where a cop beats on a rich man?

More than 100,000 people are on the waiting lists for social housing in Ontario. In 1995, close to half of the people who rent spent more than 30% of their income on rent. Over the past five years there has been a 123% increase in the numbers of children and families who are homeless, and the situation continues to worsen. Homeless people continue to die in the streets. These statistics are mere examples of the gravity of the situation in the province and no government has been willing to deal with it. Our society is moving backwards to a time when people were divided into 'deserving' and 'undeserving'. People receiving social assistance, living on the streets, disabled and mentally ill people are all becoming more and more stigmatized by a society that puts profits and goods before people.

I marched on June 15, 2000 and I got arrested and served 90 days in jail plus 260 hours of community service. When I look back now, if I am a criminal for being a voice of poor people, then I am proud to be this criminal.

After the Riot, the Resistance Continues

John Clarke

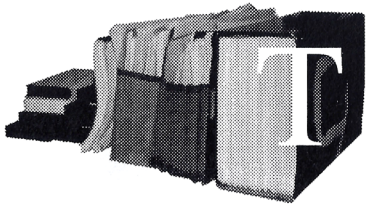
Several police officers have expressed the opinion that the so-called 'Queen's Park Riot' of June 15, 2000 was a 'watershed'. They are right in ways they can't imagine. On that day, homeless people the Tories thought they had crushed into submission stood up and demanded to be heard and treated with respect. This was a challenge to the de-humanizing logic of the 'common sense revolution' that shook those in power.

On June 15, the Tories refused to offer any mark of respect to the homeless and their allies but left it to an eager police force to clear the grounds of the Legislature and sweep aside opposition. But, even when faced with mounted units and riot cops, people stood up proudly. After it was over, every means was used to demonize and criminalize those who had participated in the June 15 action. Still, despite all the media denunciation, the dozens of arrests, the restrictive bail conditions and the legal consequences thrown at its members and supporters, OCAP continued to struggle and to grow. Its call to 'Fight to Win!' was taken up across the country and beyond. The challenge to the Tories and their whole agenda only got stronger. Nearly three years later, we are fighting for the Pope Squat as a place of shelter for homeless people and we are part of a coast-to-coast movement reclaiming housing for the homeless. They have wasted every penny of the millions of dollars they have spent on riot squads and legal persecutions in they efforts to stop us.

On January 13, a jury trial will begin that seeks to single out three members of OCAP in a political witch-hunt reminiscent of an earlier time in Canada's history. Those in power are making the same mistake they have always made. They think that by silencing those they deem to be 'leaders' of a movement they can stifle it. The charges we face are serious and we will fight them in the courtroom and out on the streets. We will expose the absurd myth of the 'planned riot' that they would try to show June 15 to have been. In the end, however, this trial will not help those in economic and political power whether they obtain their desired conviction or not. OCAP and the broader movement it is part of is not going to be silenced or intimidated. We have only begun to fight back.

June 15 2000

"YOUNG PERSON"

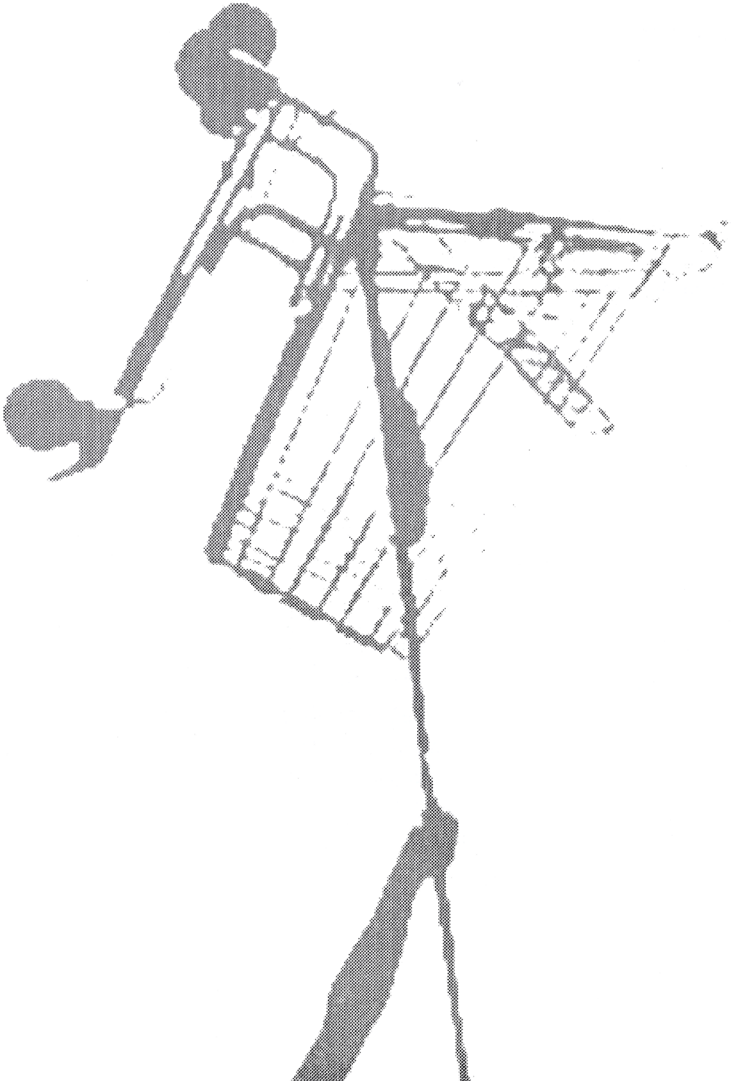


he reasons I went to Queen's Park that day are numerous and have to do with all the injustices handed down from a disgusting, corrupt, evil system. If you don't know why someone would attend an action to demand housing, visit the financial district in Toronto at 4:30 in the morning and watch people sleep on grates outside the TD/Canada Trust tower and every other corporate scum office tower down there. I was angry... I went prepared for a fight and I fought those cops for every person around the world that has died asking for the simple labour rights that we take for granted, for every revolutionary that has disappeared in the past hundred or more years, for every child of war that starves to death because of US sanctions, for every person that dies on the street in one of the wealthiest cities in the world.

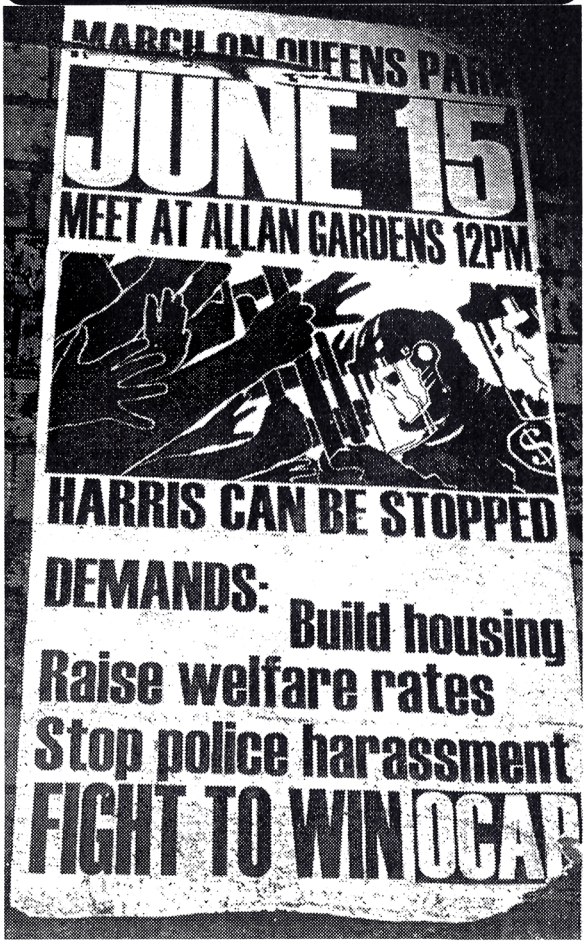
I was arrested and charged with assault police and it's not clear if I'm also being charged with participating in a riot, the charges could keep coming I'm told. Allegedly, I broke a "peace" officer's arm. The officer, Charles Stern, has been accused of beating [redacted] sex workers in my neighbourhood. Apparently all the records of these allegations have disappeared, or that's what Julian Fantino's lawyer said at one of my court dates.

I have a jury trial; they could go for the throat but I really don't know, to be honest. The past two and a half years dealing with their court system have been messy, frustrating, and hell. I think the thing I hate the most is playing dress up for some half asleep judge who's just going to agree with the crown anyways because the crown's daddy's a big time judge and my judge is probably his close family friend. I hate pretending to be a regular, sweet girl. I'm not a regular sweet girl...I'm a nasty, skiddy dyke. I'm on my second or third lawyer at this point, trial is in a month, my friends are worried, I'm sure I'll be worried really soon too. It's crazy for me to think that what I'm going through is nothing compared to non-white, non-North American revolutionaries/regular folks in so many places around the world. It's hard to be hopeful, but I have to be.

In solidarity.



disclosure


MARCH ON QUEENS PARK
JUNE 15
MEET AT ALLAN GARDENS 12PM
HARRIS CAN BE STOPPED
DEMANDS:
Build housing
Raise welfare rates
Stop police harassment
FIGHT TO WIN
OCAP

Statement and notes of
Branco NOVINC
PC 342

SING TAO
PHOTO B258

I am a member of the Toronto Police Services and have been so since February 12, 1985. I currently hold the rank of Constable and am assigned to 52 Division. On Wednesday June 28, 2000, I was assigned to Intelligence Services to assist with the investigation resulting from the Queens Park riot that occured on Thursday June 15, 2000.

Other Toronto Police Service officers assigned to this investigative team were, Det. Richard KIJEWSKI, Det. Steve IRWIN, Det. Gerhard MEISSNER, PC Paul ADAMS, PC Tim MORES, and PC Chris PARKINSON.

My duties included viewing a number of photographs taken by Ontario Provincial Police Officer Rick ALLEN on June 15, 2000 at Queen's Park Toronto.

I also viewed photographs taken at; Allen Gardens, the parade route to Queen's Park and at Queen's Park on June 15, 2000 by media photographers employed by the Toronto Sun Newspaper, National Post Newspaper, Corierre Canadese Newspaper, World Journal News, Ming Pao News and photographs taken by the Toronto Police Service.

I also viewed some video taken on June 15, 2000 at Allen Gardens and at Queen's Park.

The purpose of viewing the photographs was to identify individuals committing criminal acts, identify individuals from distinct items of clothing, locating the same person in a series of different photographs. Also to assist in the identification of the photographed person by description and clothing.

The process I used during my

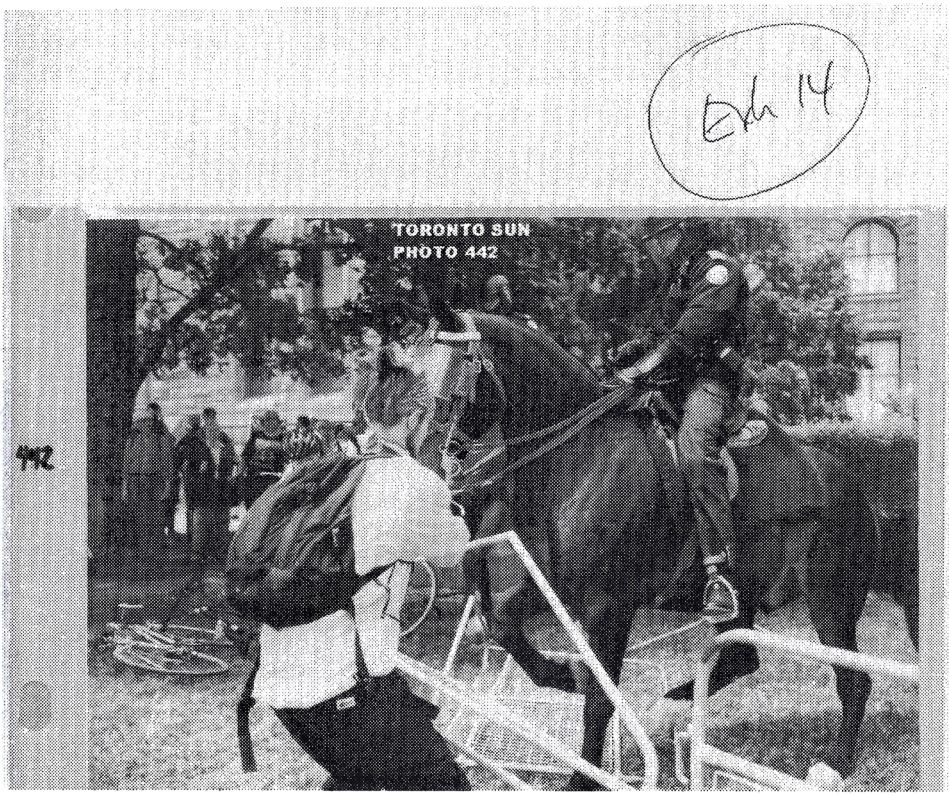
investigation was as follows:

Viewing the photographic Print;

Catologue the photographic print by assigning a sequence number to the print;

Convert the photographic print to a digital format by scanning the photograph with the aid of a Hewlett Packard 6350/6390C flatbed scanner into a computer;

Compare the digital format photograph with the original photographic print to ensure that subject matter is an exact copy of the photographic print;



Identify and highlight subject person on the digital format photograph copy;

Save the highlighted digital format photograph as a second digital format photograph showing the ***added highlights;***

Compare ***highlighted*** digital format photograph with the original photographic print to ensure that subject matter is an exact copy of the photographic print;

Transfer the digital format photographs to a recordable CD-R compact disc using a computer CD "burner" to create a compact disc containing digital format photographic images of the photographic prints;

Compare digital format photographs on CD-R to original photographic prints to ensure subject matter of CD-R photos are exact copies of original photographic prints;

Print copies of original photographs and of highlighted photographs from CD for court purposes.

During my investigation of the supplied photographs I was able to locate and identify various individuals using the following methods:

Using visual aids, Magnifying glass, 8x magnifier loupe 10x jewellers loupe

"Freeze frame" of video tapes

Viewing clear photos of an indiviuals face by still and video photography

Age, sex, colour, complexion, build

Hair style and colour

Clothing, colour, style, fit, distinctive patterns, shoes

Jewellery

Items carried such as backpacks, bicycle helmets, protective gear including colours and markings

Activity and area depicted in photograph

Proximity and relative position to other persons wearing distinctive clothing, in a series of photographs of the same area taken in rapid succession.

After having identified an individual person or object in a photograph, I made note of my observations by highlighting the digital format photograph using the following colours;

White Circle - Person Highlighted

Green Circle - Identification of clothing, object or person

Blue Circle - Distictly dressed individuals in close proximity to subject in a series of photographs

Red Circle - Objects or individuals to be noticed

The highlighted notes to the digital format photographs were made in addition to the memo book entries attached.

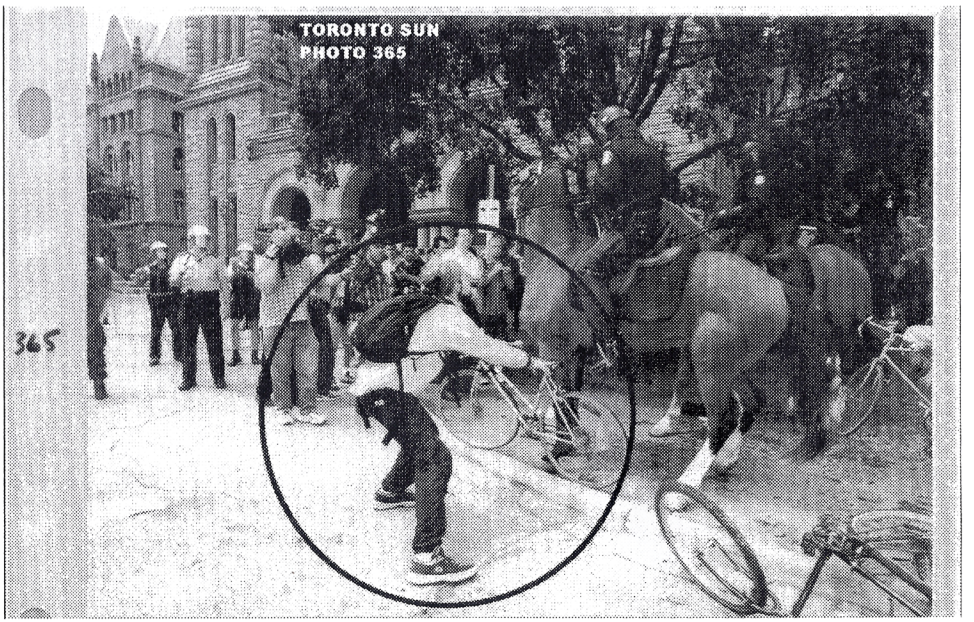
3

THURS 15-JUNE-2000

(government building) located at the N.E. corner of College & University Avenues

Exh 17

of College & University Avenues.
- O/S 1ST road E. of University N. of College, crowd of rioters throwing rocks at P.S.U. officers.
- A male native indian aprox. 6'-01" 200.lbs long blck hair throws a rock at an officer along the W. side of this ~~street~~. Native turns to us and says "I missed him by that much."
- Male is arrested by P.C. Theriault & Gricelli. We bring him to court wagon on the W. side of the building (N.E. corner College & University) and hand him ~~over~~ to wagon personnel. Male

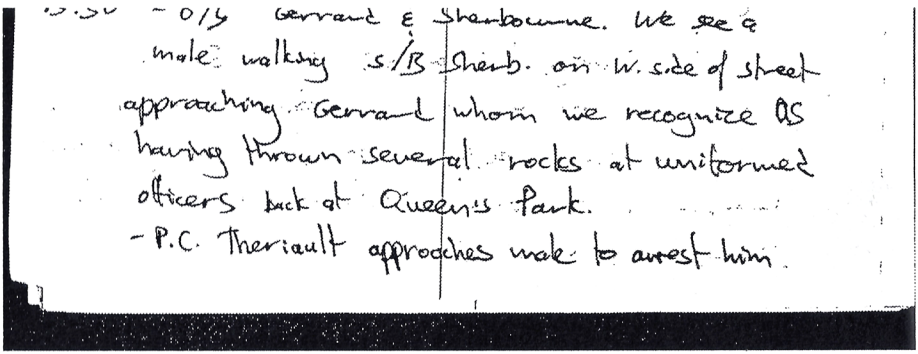


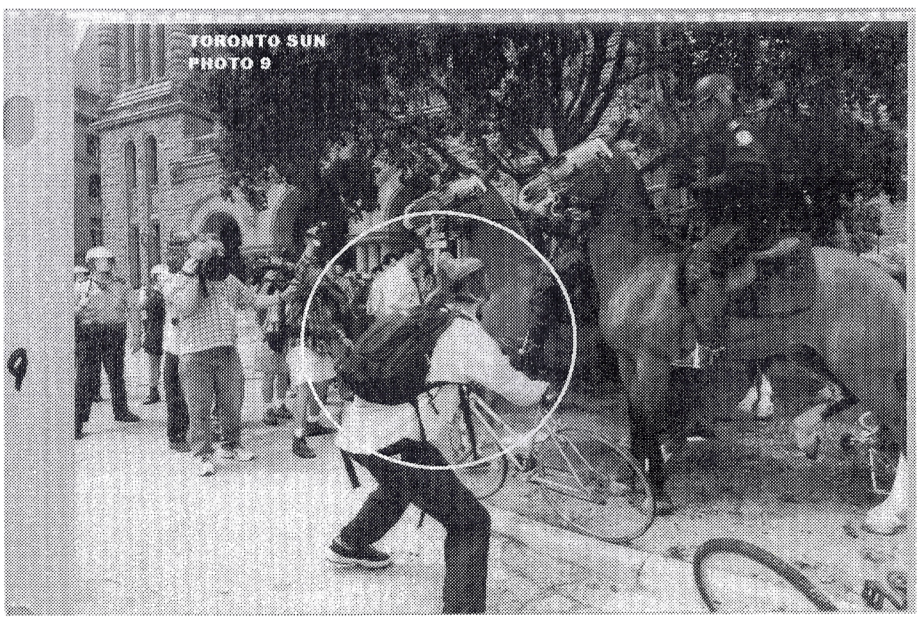
and hand him over to wagon personnel. Male refuses to identify himself & has no I.D.

15:20 – Theriault, Grialdi & I 10-8 to Allan Gardens.

- OCAP rioters return to Allan Gardens area.
- Numerous rock throwers recognized & arrested, foot pursuits, crowds trying to stop officers from arresting.

15:50 – n/c


- O/S Gerrard & Shenbourne. We see a
male walking S/B Sherb. on W. side of street
approaching Gerrard whom we recognize as
having thrown several rocks at uniformed
officers back at Queen's Park.
- P.C. Theriault approaches male to arrest him.

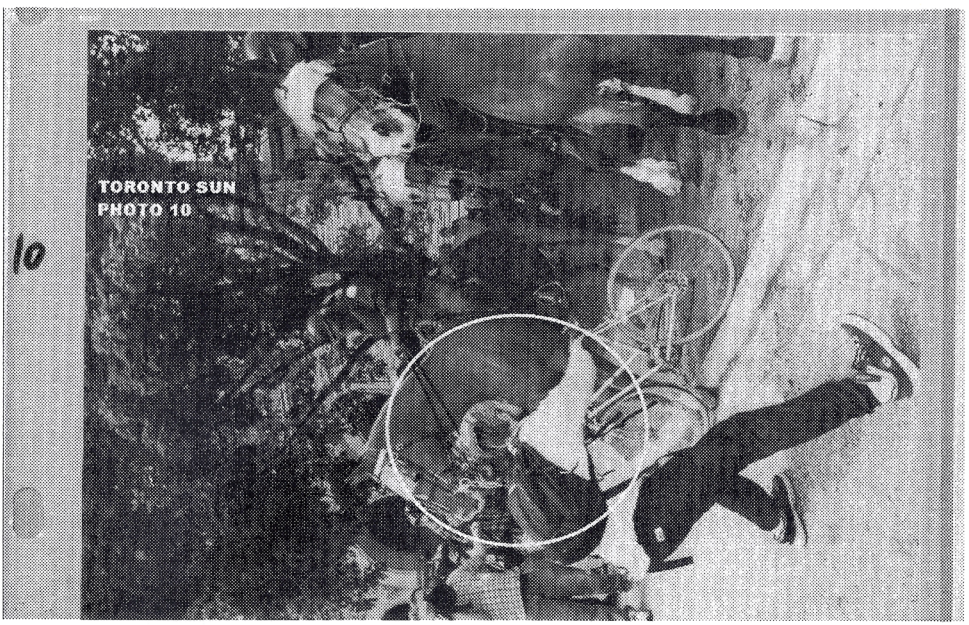

TORONTO SUN
PHOTO 9
9

Show Cause

ACCUSED: is 21 years old
born in Ontario
is single and has no dependants
lives in Toronto
is employed with Second Cup

CRIMINAL HISTORY: None known at this time

CURRENT RELEASES: None known at this time



RECOMMENDATIONS: The accused has never been in trouble with the law before. The accused has no criminal record. But the accused was involved in a serious offence. At the time of this report the main body of the rioters were attempting to regroup at an unknown location, therefore the accused must be kept in custody to prevent from further riotous acts.
If the court see fit to release the accused the court should put forth conditions to prevent the accused from participating in further events.

Form/*Formule* 5
(Section/*Article* 487)

WARRANT TO SEARCH
MANDAT DE PERQUISITION

CANADA
VINCE OF ONTARIO
VINCE DE L'ONTARIO
TORONTO REGION
GION DE TORONTO

To the Peace Officers in the Toronto Region and the Province of Ontario
Aux agents de la paix dans la région de Toronto et dans la province de l'Ontario

EAS it appears upon the information of Stephen IRWIN #4413
DU QU'il appert de la dénonciation de

ere are reasonable grounds to believe that there are in The Business Premises of City TV
iste des motifs raisonnables de croire qu'il y a dans

ision of CHUM Limited at/*à/au* 299 Queen Street West,

to, Ontario , herein called
ci-après appelés

mises, certain things namely:
certaines choses, savoir :

352-33

EFORE, this is to authorize and require you, between the hours of 10:00 AM AND 7:00 PM. to enter into
CAUSES, *les présentes ont pour objet de vous autoriser et obliger à entrer, entre* *dans*

mises and to search for the above things, and to bring them before me or some other justice to be dealt with according to
ux et de rechercher lesdites choses et de les apporter devant moi ou devant tout autre juge de paix afin quil en soit disposé selon la

this 11TH day of July, 2000, at the City of Toronto, in the Toronto Region.
jour de *dans la ville de Toronto, dans la région de Toronto*

Gail Dolney
Judge of Justice of the Peace in and for the Province of Ontario
Juge ou juge de paix dans et pour la province de l'Ontario

360

Location 4: City TV a division of CHUM Limited
299 Queen Street W.,
Toronto, Ontario

Items to be Searched For:

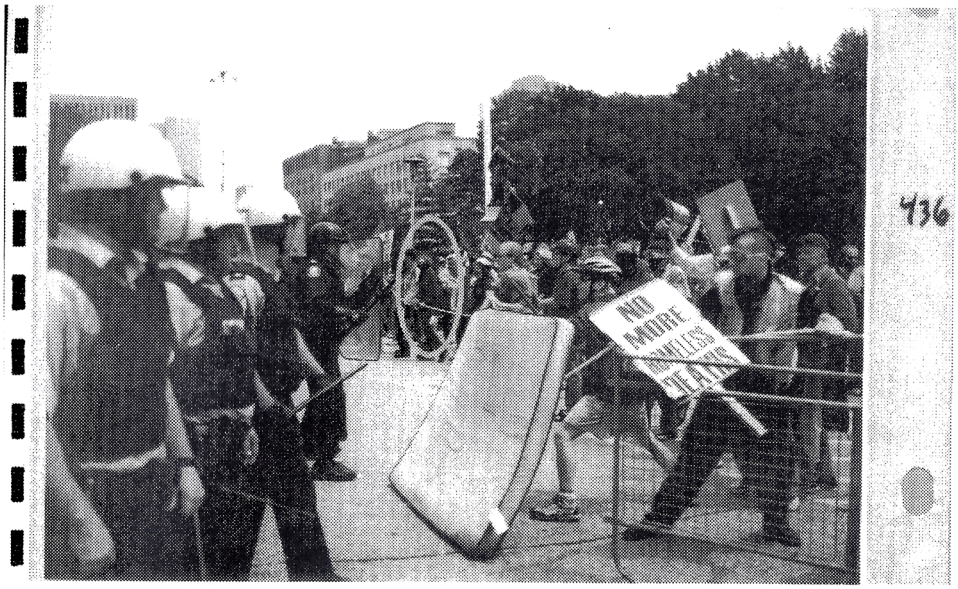
A true, unedited copy of all raw footage videotape, with a "time code burn in window" where possible, that was filmed on Thursday, June 15, 2000 in relation to the Ontario Coalition Against Poverty demonstration that commenced in Allan Gardens, marched to Queen's Park, then returned to Allan Gardens, and disbursed.

VEITCH TAPE #1

143.22	W/B COLLEGE ST	**XXXXXXXX**	REFERENCE, SPEAKING WITH XXXXXXX

VEITCH TAPE #2

4015	N/S COLLEGE ST	**XXXXXXXX**	WALKING EAST
3604	E/S QUEENS PARK CRES	**XXXXXXXX**	WALKING E/B ON GRASS



LING VHS

1211	S/W TOWARDS DRIVEWAY OFF GERRARD	**XXXXXXXX**	WALKING WITH XXXX AND THREE UNKNOWN MALES COUNTER 3806
1212	AT DRIVEWAY GERRARD INTO PARK	**XXXXXXXX**	REMOVES MATRESS FROM BLU CHRY VAN AHPYOO2 AND CAR RIES IT TOWARDS THE CROWD CARRIES IT WITH XXXX

STATEMENT FROM : **Dan Silver**
D/C #5055
51 Plain Clothes

RE: **QUEEN'S PARK RIOT**
2000-06-15

On Thursday, June 15th 2000 I was on duty working as a member of the 51 Division Plain Clothes office. Members of the Plain Clothes and Street Crime office were tasked with the O.C.A.P. demonstration schedualed for this day. Our job was to stay close to the demonstrators and to look for weapons and criminal offences.

I was partnered up with PC Theriault #5699 and P.C. Grialdi #6789 of the Street Crime office. We arrived at Allan Gardens at about 12:10pm, where people were gathering for the demonstration. There were people with O.C.A.P. signs stapled to wooden stakes. I observed that these stakes were pointed at the end. I also observed that many people had knapsacks and bottles. Some were already wearing masks and goggles. Some of these latter individuals were on bicycles and rode westbound along Gerrard before the main crowd left for Queen's Park.

The crowd then made their way west along Carlton and College to Queen's Park. I was in the area immediately south east of the Legislative building when the crowd rushed the barricades and tore them down. I saw smoke and flames on the east side of the stairs. There were all sorts of projectiles being thrown at the uniformed officers, including rocks and wooden stakes that had been used to hold up the O.C.A.P. signs.

at 14:05 hrs. I was involved in the arrest of a female (xxxxxxx XXXXXX, 78-XX-XX) who had thrown her bicycle into the legs of a horse (assault police).

The crowd eventually made their way eastbound to the other side of University Avenue, where I observed them continue to throw rocks at the uniformed officers and horses. My partners and arrested a male for throwing a rock near this location (a native indian who refused to identify himself).

We then made our way back to Allan Gardens, where the crowd had come to gather. More arrests were made here as other officers and we recognized individuals who had assaulted police at Queen's Park. When my partners and I made a couple of more arrests, crowds of O.C.A.P. demonstrators would run towards us to try to physically stop us from preforming our duties. Were it not for the uniformed officers who came to cover us, we would have been swarmed.

Considering the wordind and the pictures on the O.C.A.P. posters that were posted around the downtown area, and the presence of masks, the mattress (used to push the barricade), the pointed stakes that had their O.C.A.P. signs so quickly torn off as soon as the rioters got to Queen's Park so they could be thrown at police - there is no doubt that the riot was an orchestrated event on the part of O.C.A.P.

5055

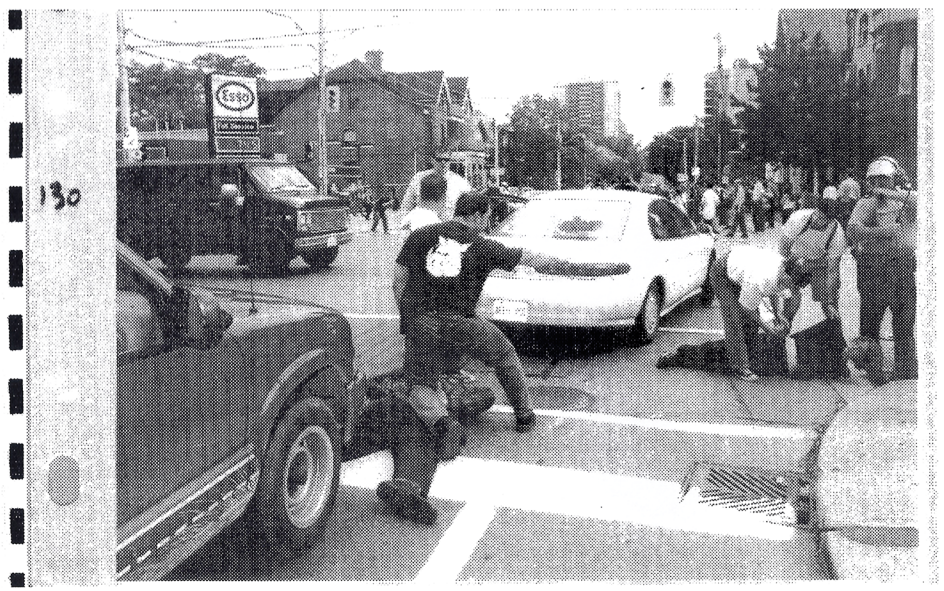
XC: UNITED [illegible]
AGAINST POVERTY
DEMONSTRATION.
SPECIAL ATTN:
- WEAPONS
- SQUIRT GUNS W/
OFFENSIVE LIQUID
- DANGEROUS PLACARDS:
OF ALLAH GARDENS.
WALK PERIMETER
W/ (E) AND

W/ (E) AND
PC DAN SILVER #5055
- WHILE WHILE
STANDING TO SIDE
U/K MALE SUSPECTS
WE ARE POLICE
OFFICERS. APPROACHES
US AND GIVES
US EACH A
PLACARD. W/
"END COMMUNISM

47

- PLACARD IS SOLID & HEAVY. TAKE THEM BACK TO OUR CAR - U/K MALE FOLLOWS US. TELLS US TO GIVE THEM BACK - REFUSE.
- DEMONSTRATION MOVES W/B CARLTON TO

- FRONT IS SURROUNDED W/ BARRICADES. BEHIND THAT IS UNIFORM + PSU OFFICERS.
- LARGE CROWD - HEAR POSSIBLE ESTIMATE OVER RADIO MAY BE AROUND 1000.
- CROWD TURNS INTO A RIOT. PARTICIPANTS



other writing

Subject: Mediocre Poets Chirping Small Hearts thru Jail Bars (Hacksaws Sadly Absent)

Paul Daniel

Dear brave and awesome fierce

i like you anywhere you are but I like you to the point of pain
when you're 3 blocks away and inside it's belly.
inside my sweet little gut
where the bench ain't metal
and the doors don't lock
and the walls don't sweat five hundred years
there's a stark unsparkling absence
like a
small kick denting me in
i see it in all the eyes of all the
tummys that love you, hun.
a gaping wrongness
like the robbing of modest tombs.

they don't deserve
you for a second
nor a seconds peace

alternate ending:
fuck the po—— lice.

2000

Toronto

Beat Of The Drum

John Lewis

at-a-tat-tat

Rat-a-tat-tat

The lone drummer spoke
The destitute moved forward
Facing gasses that made them choke
The black-clad horsemen charged
Batons in full swing
The disenfranchised kept on coming over
and over again
The big men in blue went forth
with violence in their eyes
Seeking blood indiscriminately
under Ontario skies
The horsemen regrouped and again and again
they charged
Women and children in their path
were not to be spared

Rat-a-tat-tat

Rat-a-tat-tat

We came from towns and cities far and wide,
We came to bear witness in solidarity and to stand side by side by side,
To keep their power one wonders what men will do,
They will call out the stick, the spray,
And the horses too,
When the mayhem was over, and it was time

to go home,
There were those who sat in a jail cell
all and all alone.
The media, the next day, had their doleful say,
About the riff-raff engaged in a violent fray.
What they did not mention was the likes of
you and me
Fighting and standing together longing to be free
They said it was a riot, but a riot it was not
For when tyrants declare war upon the poor
Eventually a war is fought.

Rat-a-tat-tat

Rat-a-tat-tat

2000

Sudbury

The 'Queen's Park Riot' and the Politics of Provocation: Another Look at June 15th

OCAP
Stefan Pilipa

n June 15, two thousand people marched on the Provincial Legislature under OCAP's banner. A small pre-selected delegation of homeless, unemployed, and poor people approached the barricades and demanded that they be allowed to address the house in session, prepared to lay their grievances at the Premier's feet.

We set the stage for the day with a number of letters to leading Government figures and several public statements driving home the fact that our march would be very serious in nature. By June 15, we had not had any favourable response so we proceeded with our mobilization. The general idea for the day's action was based on two highly successful actions we had organized in Ottawa the year before. Our actions had contributed considerably to the Liberals' decision to put $753 million into shelter programs for the homeless. The tactic we had employed on both occasions was to move forward and put pressure on the lines of police sent to block us. We were able to advance our goals effectively without uncontrolled confrontation.

Passivity Over

In the last several years OCAP had been clear in its desire to steer people away from the tired style of "mass therapy" protest, and begin organizing with the intention to actually win the struggles we engage in. In the months leading up to the "riot," OCAP called for a renewed sense of struggle, a new fire in the blood of those under attack and those in a position to do something about it. The slashing of affordable housing projects, the 1995 Welfare cut, the 1997 Tenant Protection Act, the 1999 Safe Streets Act, the static minimum wage, the ideological assault on trade unions, and the increasing power and violence of police forces have all been jarring blows to poor and working people. Yet, collectively we have failed to mount effective battles against these overt attacks on our lives. At Allan Gardens, before the march left for Queen's Park, OCAP organizer Gaetan Heroux listed the names of every person he knew who had died on the streets in recent years,

and then said, "In 1996 three men froze to death in this city, and since then we've had an inquest, and then the Anne Golden report, and then we've had Bradshaw! And NOTHING HAS CHANGED! Every day, people are turned away from the hostels, and we need to take this anger to Queen's Park! AND WHEN WE GET THERE WE SHOULD NOT BE SHY!"

There is no reason for anyone to go without a home, without means of economic support, and without respect, or control over their lives. For unemployed people, for homeless people, and working people there remains a base responsibility, and that is to bring about a society that will guarantee these freedoms. If this government chooses not to do that, then it must be opposed, not theoretically, not at some distant point in the future, not symbolically, nor by casting a vote, nor by simply voicing opposition. Opposition can be nothing if it is not real, as real as the deprivations of living on the street.

We were prepared to press for entry even in the face of substantial measures to turn us back. We were ready to remove barricades and, anticipating a strong force of riot cops, ensured a supply of protective equipment to counteract the disabling effects of pepper spray and police batons. We did not, however, seek to overwhelm their lines or force a mass entry into the Buildings. To do this, in our view, would have invited a panicked and extreme reaction that we had good reason to avoid. Instead, we centred our efforts on supporting the demand that our delegation be allowed to enter.

So, on the early afternoon of June 15, a crowd of between 1,500 and 2,000 people began its March on Queen's Park. When we got to the Legislature, our delegation moved up and sought to address someone in authority. The police Operational Commander, Supt. Mahar came forward to deal with us. No political figure or person from the Legislative staff was on hand. Mahar simply warned us that, if we crossed a first line of two sets of barricades, we would be charged with trespass or related offences. The delegation returned to the main crowd and asked for assistance in pressing the demand for entry. A portion of the crowd moved up to the barricades and a blatantly weak police line. Even the riot clad Public Safety Unit did not have shields. Given that a large crowd had come with the openly stated intention of demanding entry for its representatives, this was more than curious.

As we reached the barricades, nothing was done to bolster the police lines.

This, coupled with the fact that the barricades were not secured effectively, led to an initial sense that the lines were, indeed, being overrun. The police rapidly retreated to their second set of barricades and, for a short while, things were quite tense as a section of the crowd sought to press its perceived advantage. Some sporadic projectile throwing had by now broken out and the police had begun to use their batons freely. However, this initial phase rapidly gave way to a definite lull in the situation. The expected 'stand off' was now emerging. At this point, however, the mounted police unit started to move into the crowd and the riot cops began to make repeated charges. The crowd was pushed back to the original perimeter but the police showed no readiness to disengage. As they moved forward relentlessly to clear the entire grounds and, as police horses continuously rode into the crowd, a much more substantial counter attack developed. Even, after roughly an hour, when the whole gathering had been pushed across to the other side of Queen's Park Circle, the police attacks did not stop and their drive to 'quell disorder' continued to inflame things. When the grounds had been cleared and OCAP organizers sought to disengage the crowd and move back to the staging point, repeated baton attacks made it enormously difficult to leave the scene.

In all, 42 officers claimed to be injured, 9 police horses reported "stabbed and bruised" (although none needed veterinary care), 3 dozen demonstrators suffered moderate injuries (including broken bones and cracked skulls), almost $100,000 damage was done to Provincial property (as well as to police cars and uniforms), 40+ arrests of activists were made; and there has been a large amount of media reporting on the action and the issues surrounding it.

A few conclusions can be drawn as to the intentions and conduct of the political and police decision makers. First of all, the Government that had created the pressing grievances underlying the march on Queen's Park had no interest in any reasonable solution. The demand to address the Legislature was handed to bureaucrats who dismissed it as outside the norms of parliamentary tradition. No serious alternative was advanced or even explored. On the day itself, only a police official was there to curtly rebuff our delegation. No one ready or able to engage in good faith negotiation was there to deal with us. The same Premier who wanted the 'Indians out of the park' at Ipperwash, was more than happy to see the grievances of homeless people dealt with as a police matter.

Provocation

Next, the reaction of the authorities on June 15 raises the strongest suspicions of deliberate provocation. An intention to ensure a sharp confrontation that day would be entirely in line with the political outlook of the Government and the inclinations of the Toronto Police. The evidence is strongly suggestive of just such a course. Following the preliminary refusal to deal in good faith and, despite supposed police intelligence suggesting a possible confrontation, we were met with a hopelessly inadequate line of police. After the initial move forward, relative calm was restored yet a ruthless drive to clear the grounds followed. That someone in high places wanted confrontation is the most plausible explanation for all this.

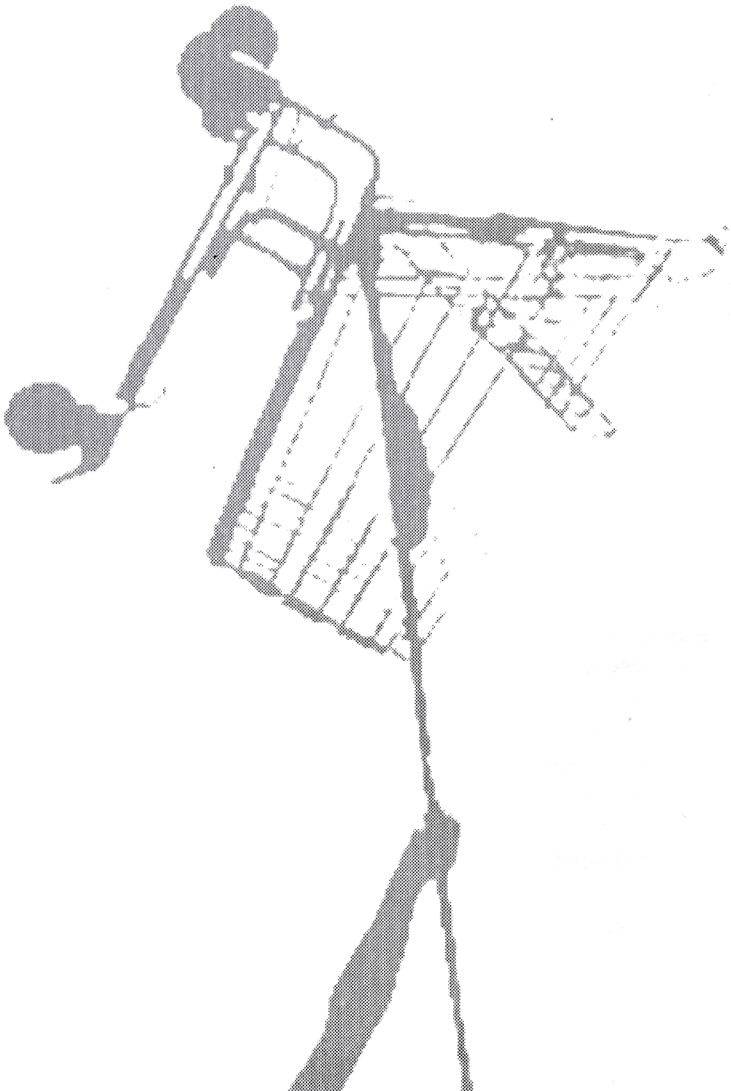
If, indeed, a plan for deliberate provocation was in place that day, it backfired on them in two interrelated ways. First of all, they did not take into account the seriousness of our preparations. We had worked to build the March over a long period and pulled out a crowd of homeless people and supporters that was several times larger than they'd expected. Secondly, when they, nevertheless, recklessly swept the grounds of Queen's Park, they seriously misjudged how such behaviour would be responded to. This was a crowd made up of some of the hardest hit victims of the Tories. We did not seek the kind of confrontation that took place on June 15 but we make no apologies for pressing our just demands as we did or for the fact that people under such brutal attack defended themselves.

No reasonable person would say that the Mohawks at Oka, or any other severely oppressed group, should not use whatever means at their disposal to defend themselves. No reasonable person would say that when a slumlord is coming at you with a baseball bat, you should simply "turn the other cheek." For any person concerned with the issues of homelessness, poverty, and the well being of the working population the question of how to go about defending what we have and taking back what has been taken away, must also consider the question of force. Poor people have limited means to respond to the relentless ideological and physical attacks they suffer at the hands of this society, and this particular government. The basic issues involve, issues of death and suffering, issues of safety and dignity in life, these do not allow space for the well-meaning (but often useless) intentions of conscientious objectors who preach peaceful protest even as the police

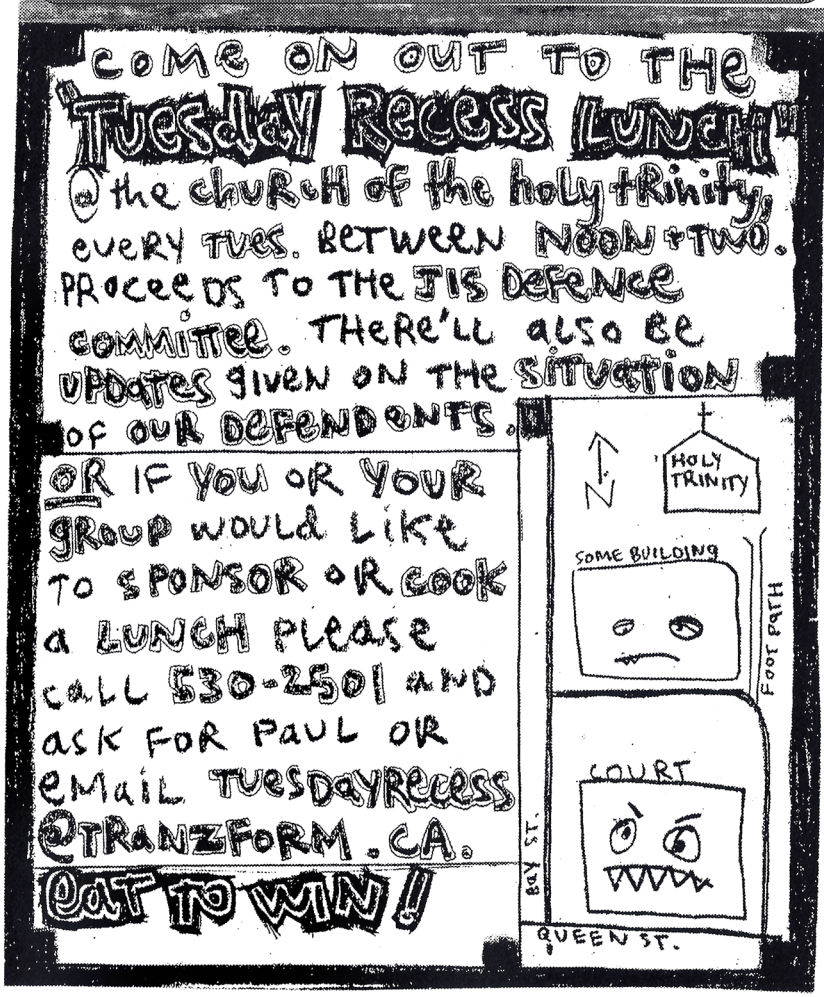
truncheons rain down.
There are two legacies to June 15 that we would like to address. First of all, it was a watershed in terms of resistance to the Tory Regime and the broader 'global' agenda it personifies. We were vilified in the media and persecuted by the police but we won massively increased support and respect. The call to 'fight to win' that came out of June 15 has been taken up by others and the movement to challenge the Tories has gone forward.

Finally, whatever the immediate consequences we face, we are proud of the stand we took on June 15, 2000 and the contribution we have made to building real resistance in this Province and beyond. Such a response is needed in the face of the attacks we face from governments like the one that sits in Queen's Park. We will mount a legal and a political struggle against the charges they have laid against us but we make clear that no measures of intimidation will stop us from moving forward. Come to our support in the days ahead but, more importantly still, build the struggle and fight to win!

This article is an adaptation of two articles: "The 'Queen's Park Riot' and the Politics of Provocation" by OCAP which is underlined and featured at www.ocap.ca and "Another Look at June 15th" by Stefan Pilipa, featured in the OCAP Publication (They Call It Struggle For a Reason) #3, Fall 2000.



appendices


COME ON OUT TO THE
"Tuesday Recess Lunch"
@ the church of the holy trinity,
every tues. between noon + two.
proceeds to the JIS defence
committee. there'll also be
updates given on the situation
of our defendants.
OR IF YOU OR YOUR
group would like
to sponsor or cook
a lunch please
call 530-2501 and
ask for paul or
email tuesdayrecess
@tranzform.ca.
eat to win!
N
HOLY TRINITY
SOME BUILDING
FOOT PATH
COURT
BAY ST.
QUEEN ST.

Appendix A

Press Releases

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE JANUARY 24, 2002

FIRST JUNE 15th DEFENDANT GOES TO TRIAL

On Monday, January 28, the first trial of an OCAP member charged in connection with the events of June 15th 1999 at Queen's Park will begin. PJ Lilley has pled "not guilty" to the charge of "assaulting a peace officer". There will be a brief rally on the steps of the Old City Hall courthouse at 9:30 am Monday.

OCAP, along with some 1500 members and supporters went to the Legislature to bring a delegation forward to address the House regarding the crisis of homelessness and police brutality faced by poor people across the province. On that day, almost two years ago, Harris could have allowed the handful of delegates to speak their concerns on the floor, but instead he decided to throw up the barricades, and send out police. Rather than a fair hearing, protesters met with hundreds of riot police, who attacked with horses and batons, trampling even first aid areas and by-standers, chasing everyone out of the Park, beating and arresting as they went.

During that day, and over the following months, at least 45 people were arrested, and conditions against association with OCAP, against attending demonstrations, and even against walking on Queen's Park were thrown at detainees. Yet, the more than 58 allied organizations and OCAP continued on, challenging and winning bail variations striking down some of the more unconstitutional conditions. They also continued on organizing and resisting this government, the only clear choice considering the still-rising homelessness, and even more deaths on the street.

Now this Monday, through until May begins the trials of several of those arrested. This fall, OCAP organizers John Clarke, Gaetan Heroux, and Stefan Pilipa, will stand trial. The June 15th Defense Committee and OCAP

call for courtroom support. Please come and show the arrestees they do not stand alone.

In the streets, and in the courts, we will not give up the fight!

For more information, please contact: John Clarke, Ontario Coalition Against Poverty, 416-925-6939

PJ Lilley, June 15th Defense Committee xxx-xxxx

JUNE 15 DEFENCE COMMITTEE
IN THE STREETS AND IN THE COURTS — FIGHT TO WIN!

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE FEBRUARY 13TH/01

VALENTINES DAY RALLY
for those facing charges from "police riot" at Queen's Park (June 15th 2000)
SHOW US THE LOVE

Where: Old City Hall Courthouse

When: Thursday February 14, 9am to 10am

Toronto, Ont. — On February 14 at Old City Hall, representatives from a variety of community and labour organizations will rally in a show of support for those currently undergoing trials for charges stemming from an anti-poverty demonstration at Queen's Park June 15th 2000.

Speakers will include representatives from the Toronto Disaster Relief Committee, Hotel Employees Restaurant Employees Union, Canadian Union of Public Employees (local 3903), the Latin American Coalition Against Racism, School of the Americas Watch (Canada), and many more.

"Especially in light of the recent attacks on civil liberties, it is vital that we show our support for those who are being criminalized for bringing attention to the shocking situation of poverty in this province" says Asad Ismi of School of the Americas Watch (Canada). "We are here to show that they are

not alone."
31 people will be facing trial this winter and spring on "June 15" charges. They represent many of Toronto's diverse communities. Many are deeply involved in political organizing in various groups. For others, June 15 was their first demonstration. The trial process, already 19 months after the demonstration, has been characterized by lengthy delays.

"We're here not only to stand together as June 15th defendants, but also to bring attention to the way in which these courts are used every day to persecute those who can't afford to live under this system,"says defendant Mike Brito." This government has come up with a solution to the housing crisis. They call it jail."

Contact: John Clark— OCAP - Day of xxx-xxxx: Mike Brito xxx-xxxx

OCAP MEMBER UNDER STRICT HOUSE ARREST
E-MAIL UPDATE: THURSDAY 19 JULY, 2/01

On Monday July 16th, OCAP member Sean Lee-Popham was granted bail under extremely strict conditions, but was not released until Wednesday afternoon — he spent 36 days in jail.

Sean was released on $70,000 bail. Forced to live with his surety, Sean is not allowed to leave the residence, except for purposes of employment or for court dates, and may only do this if accompanied by his surety (Sean's father). He may not have direct or indirect contact with any member of OCAP or his co-accused.

Sean was forced to spend two additional nights in jail, only to be released on Wednesday, because the judge mistakenly refused to deal with Sean's June 15th bail conditions. This matter has now been addressed, after unnecessary delay. Sean left the Whitby Jail yesterday, on the same day as the other 18 accused OCAP members returned for another court appearance.

The conditions imposed upon Sean are extreme and unacceptable — a sign of the continuing repression of an organization that is serious in its fight against the Harris government.

Appendix B

Poster Texts

IN THE STREETS AND IN THE COURTS
FIGHT TO WIN

On June 15, 2000 fifteen hundred people marched on Queen's Park to protest the Tory Government's war on the poor. They demonstrated for an end to the Safe Streets Act, to stop the cuts to welfare and for more affordable housing. When attacked by police, many people defended themselves, and others, against the violent attempts at silencing them. Thirty-three of these people are currently on trial or will go on trial in the coming months. These political trials are being used in attempt to quash political dissent in this province. Supporting these defendants means supporting the fightback against the Tories and other parasites who feed off the poor.

PUBLIC MEETING: Wednesday, February 13, 8pm at the 519 Community Centre. Speakers include Judy Rebick, John Clarke, Peter Rosenthal and Magaly San Martin. By donation with proceeds to defendants. Toronto.

MARCH 15 IS INTERNATIONAL DAY AGAINST POLICE BRUTALITY

Friday, March 15 at 1pm
Police Headquarters (College and Yonge)
COMMUNITY RALLY AGAINST POLICE BRUTALITY!

Year after year, the City has no new money for housing, no new money for programs, but the amount of money that police get always increases ($15 million increase this year alone!!). Join the demand for:

— an end to racial profiling
— a repeal of the Safe Streets Act
— a coroner's inquest into the police killing of Dudley George

— a halt to the acquisition of police helicopters

Bring your signs, banners, drums, flags and friends to demand a stop to these and other forms of police brutality!

The rally will be followed by a march to the Coroner's Office to demand an inquest into the killing of Dudley George by the OPP, and a meeting of people alarmed by the unchecked growth of police power and resources.

Earlier in the day, come out in support of the following:

10am — Old City Hall (Queen and Bay): sentencing of June 15th defendant James Semple

11am — College Park (Yonge and College): sentencing of Samuel Tassew from OCAP Safe Park/Allan Gardens

Organized by: Anti-Racist Action, Committee to Stop Targeted Policing, June 15 Defence Committee, Stop the Choppers, and the Toronto Police Accountability Coalition

Appendix C

June 15 Defence Committee Statement

The Fight for Independent Media

The (over)reaction of the state surrounding June 15th has had serious implications for not just the freedoms of speech and assembly, but also for freedom of the press. Following June 15th, the police exercised search warrants on all of the major media outlets that attended the demonstration.

CBC, CTV, Global, ONTV, City TV, and the Globe and Mail fought the search warrants in court saying that their constitutional right to freedom of the press without state interference or intrusion was violated.

This case was very important because if the police were to win, it could undermine the ability for media to work independently from the government. Essentially, the media would be acting as an agent of the state since all of its footage, photos and recordings could be forced to be turned over. The police would no longer need to do extensive recording of events as they could have the media do it for them.

In addition, activists could no longer quietly invite trusted members of the media to their actions with the understanding that they would conceal people's identities or certain actions. Gone would be the long standing tradition of media protection of secret sources. Indeed, if this case was lost, media investigations would also be criminal investigations.

Since March 2, 2001 when the Court of Appeal of Ontario brought down its verdict, this has been exactly the situation for media in this country. All three judges agreed that it was reasonable for the police to use the media as a tool for evidence gathering. Whatever notion of an independent media remained in Canada was shattered when the courts allowed the warrants. The lesson learned here was one that would be repeated many times throughout the June 15 saga: you cannot find justice in the courts.

Appendix D

Text from Signs on the Back of the Masonite Placards Held on June 15

ATTENTION:

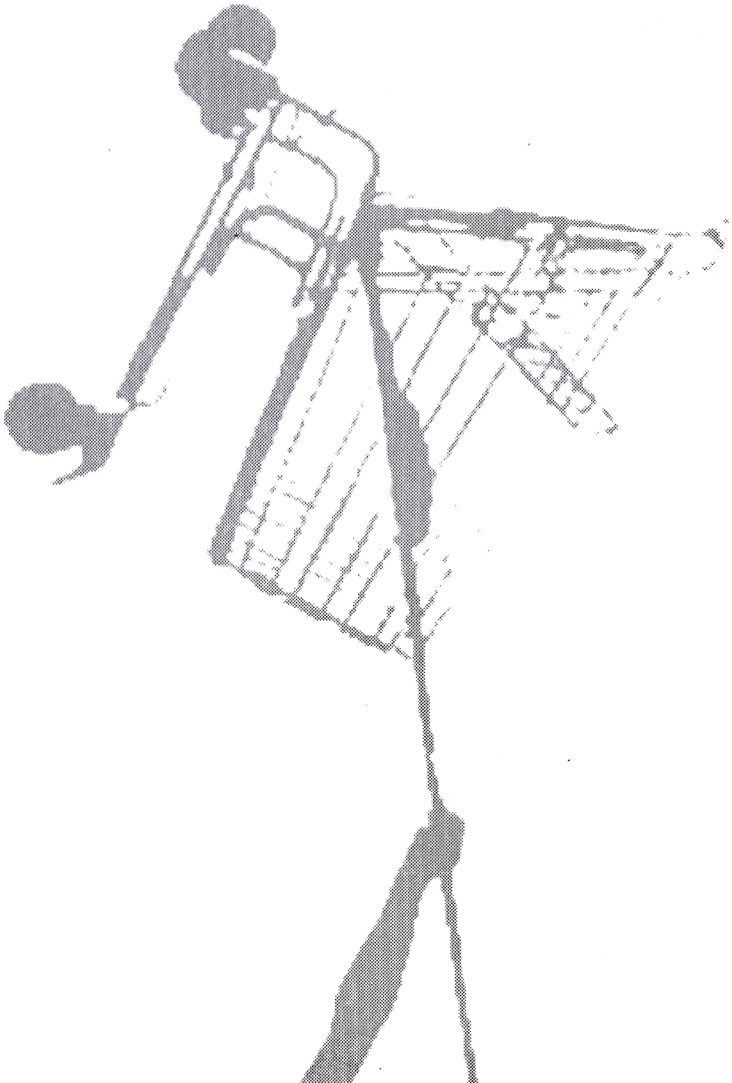
This picket sign is intended to be used defensively:

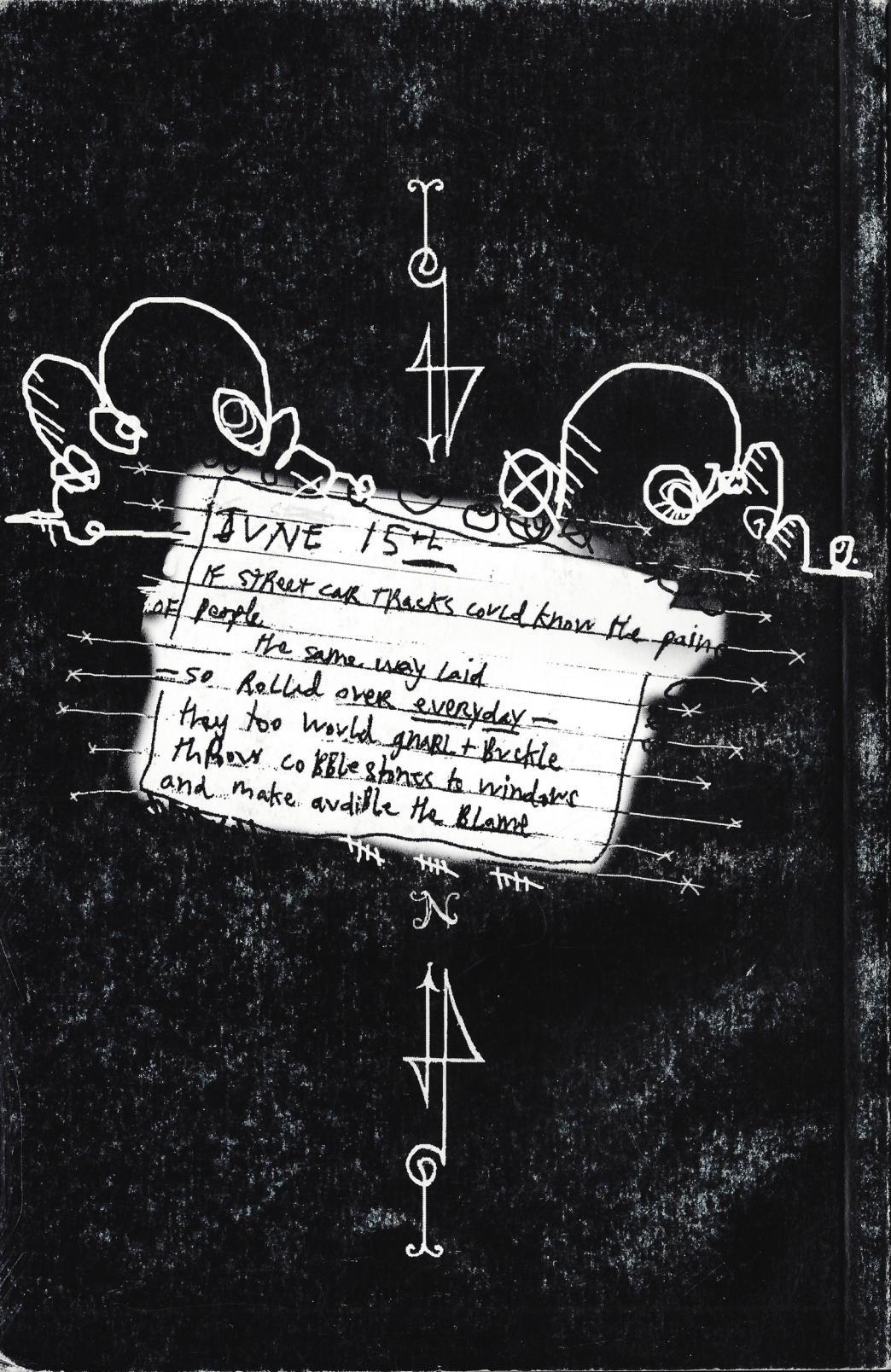
If you are going to carry this sign, position yourself at the front and sides of the march in order to protect others.

ATTENTION:

Cette affiche de piquetage est strictement defensives

Si vous aller porter cette affiche, svp positionez-vous aux cotes de la manif,ou au front, afin de proteger tout le monde.




JUNE 15th
If STREET CAR TRACKS could know the pain
OF People
the same way laid
—so Rolled over everyday—
they too would gnARL + Buckle
THROW cobblestones to windows
and make audible the BLame